



Date: January 28, 2005
To: Gerald R. Miller, City Manager
From: Katherine Parsons, Public Information Officer
For: Mayor and Members of the City Council
Subject: Weekly Update Ending January 28, 2005

The following weekly update highlighting various activities for the week ending February 28, 2005 is provided for your information. I hope you will find this information useful. Please feel free to contact my staff should you have any questions.

MAJOR WEEKLY HIGHLIGHTS

Community Development

The Pacific City Lights development broke ground on January 24. Pacific City Lights will be a new \$13.3 million development of 42 workforce housing units for large families. A new tot lot, jogging track, mini soccer field, computer room and community room will be provided to the tenants. The City invested \$3.68 million in Pacific City Lights, using non-general funds dedicated to income-restricted housing.

Health and Human Services

DHHS' Homeless Services Program led volunteers in the Homeless Census Count for 2005 on January 27. The homeless count in Long Beach will be aggregated with other cities in Los Angeles County.

Police

Last week, Chief Batts, Deputy Chief Jackman, Fire Chief Ellis and other representatives from the Police Department traveled to Israel. The trip, hosted by the Anti-Defamation League, provided Department representatives a first hand look at their methods of emergency response to terrorist attacks.

The Long Beach Police Department promoted four officers to the rank of sergeant on January 26. The newly appointed sergeants are: Sergeant Dan Barkwill, Sergeant Dina Zapalski, Sergeant Julie Anderson, and Sergeant Kevin Peterson.

Parks, Recreation and Marine

The Department has held five community meetings on Universally Accessible Playgrounds. Discussions at the meetings were lively and the reaction was positive. Participants at the meetings were receptive to the idea of expanding play access to a wide range of physical, mental, and developmental abilities.

MAJOR WEEKLY HIGHLIGHTS (continued)

Parks, Recreation and Marine

The City is working with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers to resolve the channel blockage at Catalina Landing. Catalina Express is temporarily redirecting Long Beach traffic to San Pedro, and will reopen the dock near the Queen Mary for use until the Catalina Landing channel is open.

UPCOMING EVENTS AND PROJECTS

Community Development, Redevelopment Bureau

The Long Beach Redevelopment Agency hired an independent team of consultants to evaluate the effectiveness of Redevelopment in Long Beach. On **February 2**, the team will hold a public open house at Silverado Park from 6:00 to 8:00 p.m. to provide an opportunity for residents to speak with its members. Feedback regarding the Agency's successes, failures and effectiveness in involving the public is being sought. For more information, call the Independent Study Hotline at (800) 872-9251, or contact Johnny Vallejo, at (562) 570-6792.

Library Services

The fourth annual "Long Beach Reads One Book" will kick off with a special event on **February 3**, 12:00 noon, on Centennial Plaza between the Library and City Hall. Book Week, sponsored by the Long Beach Public Library Foundation, will take place from March 13-18 with special events throughout the City. Residents are encouraged to participate by reading Ray Bradbury's classic *Fahrenheit 451* and attending the numerous events. The Library and Foundation websites (www.lbpl.org, www.lbplfoundation.org) provide a complete calendar of events and a print version will be available at libraries and bookstores.

Health and Human Services

DHHS is cosponsoring and HIV/AIDS Women's Caucus meeting on **January 31** entitled "Participating in a Research Study - The What, Why and How," featuring guest speaker Dr. Ramani Durvasula of CSULA/Drew HARP Study.

AWARDS

Community Development, Housing Services/Redevelopment Bureau

The California Redevelopment Association (CRA) has awarded the 2005 CRA Award of Excellence in the category of Multi-Family Residential to the Long Beach Redevelopment Agency for the Grisham Community Housing Project. The project is a joint effort between the Long Beach Housing Development Company, the Long Beach Redevelopment Agency and the Los Angeles Community Design Center; consisting of 96 rehabilitated apartment units for very low-income families. This prestigious award will be presented at the CRA Annual Conference & Expo on March 9.

PUBLIC SAFETY

Fire Department

The Fire Department responded to a total of 1,347 emergency calls for service: 120 calls for fires, of which 21 involved structures; and 695 emergency medical calls, of which 511 required paramedics. The Fire Department recently began dispatching for Animal Control after hours and received 179 calls for service.

Police

The Investigations Bureau has dedicated a team of detectives along with Community Policing Officers to focus solely on the recent rash of shattered window burglaries that have occurred throughout the city. This combined team effort along with heightened patrol awareness, will provide an increased police presence to businesses in Long Beach. The detectives and Community Policing Officers have altered their schedules to provide seven-day coverage to support the Patrol Officers.

Vice Detectives conducted an early evening to late night "John Program" on January 20 to target prostitution activity in North Long Beach. The program resulted in eight arrests and the impounding of eight vehicles.

NEIGHBORHOODS

Community Development

Escrows have closed on all four units of the 429 Almond Avenue development. The 429 Almond Avenue development converted an existing 8-unit apartment building into four, two-story townhouse units. Three of the units were sold to low-income, first-time homebuyers. The fourth unit was sold to a participant of the Section 8 Homeownership Program. This program allows a recipient of Section 8 the opportunity to purchase their first home and use their Section 8 voucher to assist with the mortgage payment. A public lottery was held to select all of the homeowners.

The Neighborhood Resource Center hosted a workshop to teach neighborhoods how to apply for Neighborhoods USA's Neighborhood of the Year Award on January 24. A diverse group of 35 residents learned how the innovative programs and projects happening in their neighborhoods could make them eligible to win. The Neighborhood Resource Center has assisted several neighborhood groups to successfully win this award including the Willmore City Heritage Association in 2004. Carrol Goddard of the Willmore City Heritage Association and the Chair of the Willmore Community Police Center shared with the group the PowerPoint presentation used in the 2004 competition. Neighborhood of the Year Award applications are available on-line at www.nusa.org or can be picked up at the Neighborhood Resource Center. In addition, technical assistance is available by appointment. Please contact JoAnn Rojas at (562) 570-1010 or JoAnn_Rojas@longbeach.gov for more information.

NEIGHBORHOODS (continued)

Parks, Recreation and Marine

Beach Maintenance is continuing to inspect the waterlines, remove all hazards and large debris, and the piles of accumulated debris from the beaches. Staff is averaging between 300- and 400-tons per week in debris removal.

Sixty-five trees were trimmed in El Dorado Regional Park around the Ranger Station, due to the recent loss of seven large pine trees in that area. The trees in this highly used area were over grown and extremely heavy with growth.

The Heartwell Golf course driving range, which was badly damaged in recent storms, has reopened with four adjacent holes temporarily out of use until the new steel poles and protective netting are installed in the coming weeks.

Repairs at Stearns Champions Park ball field #2 were completed. The backstop, fencing, fabric, double bottom rail system, top netting, painting of all frameworks, and the dugout bench has been replaced.

At Rotary Park, fencing and pilaster installation are complete. Work is continuing on the playground, electrical, and DG walkway.

The new "Sky Cafe" in the Skylinks Golf Course Clubhouse is now open serving a full menu for breakfast and lunch. The bar area is open until 8:00 p.m. The new banquet facilities are available to rent for upcoming events.

Plans have been approved for 55th Way Park and are currently out to bid.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Community Development

The Economic Development Bureau will engage the community in a series of focus groups to solicit input for the new Jobs and Business Strategy (JBS). The JBS is a new strategy that will guide the City's economic development efforts for the next five years. Eleven different focus groups ranging from retail, trade, small business and high tech businesses will be conducted. The purpose of the focus groups will be to discuss the challenges and strengths of the Long Beach economy, and garner input on different strategies for future economic development. Over the next four months, the Strategy will continue to solicit community input through a series of community meetings, neighborhood meetings and a second round of focus groups.

From October 1, 2004 to January 25, 2005, the Economic Development Bureau awarded 22 \$2,000 Business Start-up Grants to Long Beach-based businesses, designed to encourage an increase in new businesses along certain corridors of the City. The program provides a \$2,000 reimbursement grant for start-up related costs to eligible businesses on a first-come, first-served basis.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT (continued)

Community Development

The Business Assistance Committee of the Economic Development Commission approved a \$35,000 loan to American Solutions Plus, LLC to help finance equipment purchase and bolster working capital. This company specializes in legal services to the Latino community. The loan will be funded with Redevelopment Agency funds from the North Long Beach Project Area.

SPECIAL EVENTS

Community Development

Economic Development Bureau staff made a presentation at the North Village Center Commercial Corridor Revitalization Meeting on January 25. Staff presented information on business development programs and services offered at the Business Development Center. In addition, staff informed attendees that the Bureau granted a \$2 million business loan to a North Long Beach business that will help to create more than 60 jobs.

Fire

The City's Fire Ambassadors and Fire units attended Buffum Elementary & Emerson Elementary School to talk about Fire Safety, utilizing LBFD's Fire Safety House to help educate third graders about life safety techniques in the event of a fire. Fire prevention is a key component of this program and many students help create fire safety plans for their families.

Members from the Fire Department's Community Services Division participated in two career days at Jefferson Leadership Academy and CSULB. Community Services informed students about the many opportunities available in fire services and how to prepare for a career in the fire department.

On January 20, the Fire Department and Technology Services Wireless Division co-hosted a California Public-Safety Radio Association (CPRA) meeting at the Emergency Operations Center (EOC). Members of the organization were given tours of the facility and learned more about the capabilities of the City's communications systems.

Health and Human Services

DHHS' Healthy Active Long Beach Program conducted a healthy cooking demonstration on January 26 for staff and DHHS clients to promote healthy living by providing information on the importance of eating a balanced diet.

DHHS' Students Talking About Resisting Substances (STARS) Program hosted a youth community forum on January 27, bringing organizations together to share experiences and issues related to youth, and raising awareness of alcohol, tobacco and other drug abuse by youth.

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SPECIAL EVENTS

Parks, Recreation and Marine, Community Enrichment Programs Bureau

On January 22, the Skate Park on Wheels hosted its 2nd Annual LBX Skate Grand Crown Championship, at El Dorado Skate Park. More than 60 participants competed in beginner, intermediate and advanced divisions for prizes and trophies. Approximately 300 friends and families watched as Long Beach's finest amateur skaters performed their best tricks for competition. Fourth District City Councilmember Patrick O'Donnell and Parks and Recreation Commission Vice President Harry Saltzgaver handed out the awards to the winners in each division.

On January 22, approximately 50 youth participated in the first annual Basketball Jam Clinic at Cherry Park, learning the basic fundamentals of dribbling, passing, shooting and teamwork.

OTHER ITEMS OF NOTE

Parks, Recreation and Marine, Special Events and Filming Bureau

The Office of Special Events and Filming will begin plans for the Toyota Grand Prix of Long Beach.

GRM: KP: arc

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